



# ***RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY***

## ***Municipal Police Training Academy***

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Colonel James M. Manni  
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police  
Director, Department of Public Safety

Lieutenant Christopher J. Zarrella  
Executive Director  
Municipal Police Training Academy

### **Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training**

#### **Meeting Minutes**

**August 19, 2020**

#### **1. Welcome and Roll Call**

**Chief Mello** called to order the regular meeting of the Police Officers Commission on Standards & Training (POST) at 10:08 a.m. on **August 19, 2020**.

Chief Mello took a roll call. The following POST members were present at the zoom meeting: Chief Mello, Colonel Michael Winquist, Colonel Hugh Clements and Maria Deaton. Absent is Mr. Shawn Brown. Also present were Lieutenant Christopher Zarrella, David Ricciarelli, Donna Lavallee; Corporal Kristopher Lagor; Chief Syd Wordell, Ryan Holt; Adam Sholes, Paul Dutra, RI Interlocal Trust.

#### **2. Discussion/Approval of minutes:**

Chief Mello asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the POST Meeting of June 8, 2020. Colonel Winquist made a motion to accept the minutes ; Colonel Clements seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

#### **3. Review of Proposed Policy, General Order 6.400 (tabled from June 8)**

Chief Mello stated that this discussion started over a year ago as the former language in the policy was not clear enough regarding how many appeals and put us in a bad position to allow multiple opportunities. As it stands now, the written portions get two bites of the apple while the language is unclear for the practical curriculum such as Firearms and Use of Force.

Lieutenant Zarrella stated he has spoken at length with the Firearms Lead instructors as to why there are three test outs for Firearms. They explained how the system was before and this is what they come up. He said basically he just changed the language in the policy to read "OR"; so if the recruit fails, he can re-test OR send to the next Academy OR withdraw.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding why every other subject matter you only get two bites and for Firearms you get 3 chances and possibly a 4<sup>th</sup>. Lieutenant Zarrella explained that the Experiential Training (Role Play) you get 3 chances to bring everything together because it is more subjective for instructors due to the stations.

Chief Wordell added that the two areas under most scrutiny are swimming and Firearms. Paul Dutra added that as a certifying body, documenting and getting on record as to why is the main objective. Chief Mello suggests one failure, then the department does remedial, then a 2<sup>nd</sup> test and if a failure, an appeal is needed at that point.

Chief Mello made a motion to accept the policy as amended with after the failure of the first test, the department is notified to provide remedial training. A 2<sup>nd</sup> test will be administered. If another failure, an appeal must be requested. Colonel Winkvist seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion passes. There was then some discussion about the wording under Subsection "N". Ryan Holt suggested if you change it, you could be boxing yourself in. Chief Mello added that Subsection "N" should be left unchanged.

#### **4. Discussion on De-Certification Process of officers**

Chief Mello stated that this discussion started four years ago but action has never been taken. He feels we have a responsibility to create a pathway to do this and asked Legal Counsel if the POST could. Adam Scholz replied that Rhode Island does not have the L.E. Board. Chief Mello asked if we can consider a POST policy where it states if an officer is terminated from an agency, that officer's certification is subject to review by the POST and subject to revocation. Dave Ricciarelli stated that you could possibly add it to the POST authority in the line in the policy of the "Three Year rule". Chief Wordell agreed and said you already have a policy, you could just expand on it. There was some discussion as to whether or not an officer would be placed in "inactive" status upon leaving an agency. Paul Dutra brought up the question of an officer retiring on a Friday and starting a new job on the Monday. Chief Mello suggested the policy could be amended. Adam agreed but stated you would have to include due process. There was further discussion as to listing an officer as "inactive" versus "suspended" or "terminated". Chief Mello asked Lt. Zarrella to look into other states that automatically puts you in an "inactive" status upon termination and this would be further addressed at the November POST meeting.

#### **5. Discussion pertaining to Active Military police officers being considered Waiver candidates**

Corporal Kris Lagor addressed the POST members with the discussion on building momentum between the National Guard and law enforcement. The Guard wants to create pathways for those enlisted who are interested in becoming police officers. He discussed 3 pathways:

1. Brigade officer would join the RIPCA and could then ask for seats
2. The Guard would pay for seats and they would meet all the requirements as any other recruit
3. Would attend and become a "free agent" upon graduation

He discussed another option that Connecticut follows which is upon a 1059 (graduation diploma from the military, they would be eligible for a waiver candidate. He is leery on this option.

The option Massachusetts follows is not fully a waiver candidate, but more robust training.

Chief Mello stated that over two years ago there was a discussion about open seats at the Academy and it is a great pathway and great opportunity and doesn't see anything negative at all. He would lean towards option 3. He asked if this would be limited to MP's and Corporal Lagor stated yes. Lt. Zarrella stated this is very similar to FLETC and basically a waiver process. Adam suggested a policy in place should this happen. Chief Mello asked if there may be legislature in place that dictates who can attend the Academy and Lt. Zarrella didn't think so.

Chief Mello made a motion supporting the proposal as written with a focus on whether or not it requires a legislation change. Colonel Clements seconded the motion.

Ryan Holt asked that the POST not take any action at this point. He will have a meeting in combination with himself, Lt. Zarrella and Paul Dutra to get something more official in place.

**6. Request for Approval of Firearms Qualification Courses**

- Bristol PD
- East Greenwich PD
- Gloucester PD
- North Kingstown PD
- Portsmouth PD
- Rhode Island Capitol Police
- Woonsocket

Lt. Zarrella stated that East Greenwich, Gloucester, North Kingstown, Portsmouth and Woonsocket all meet the state requirements and he is recommending approval of their courses. Bristol and Rhode Island Capitol Police have to provide additional documentation to Captain Gould and therefore, he is recommending tabling those until the next POST meeting.

Chief Mello made a motion to approve those five department's courses and table Bristol and Capitol Police; Colonel Clements seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion passes.

**7. Instruction Certification**

Lt. Zarrella asked for approval for Mr. Ryan Stys, Esquire, for the Civil Liability Instruction. Mr. Paul Dutra is the Lead Instructor and Mr. Paul Brouillette was his back up instructor; however, Paul has recently retired. Lt. Zarrella stated he highly recommends Mr. Stys and comes highly recommended by Paul Dutra as well. Colonel Winquist made a motion to approve Mr. Stys' application; Colonel Clements seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, motion carries.

**8. Update and Discussion on Class 2020-II**

Lt. Zarrella stated that the class is in Week 4 and going well. The class started with 43 and is at 41 presently. He spoke of the COVID measures and so far, everyone is well.

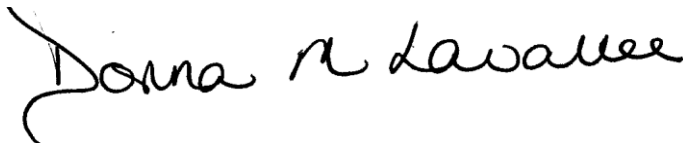
**9. Continuing Education Calendar**

Captain Ricciarelli stated that since COVID in March, most trainings have been virtual. We do have some trainings coming up by KFD that will be held here.

**10. Adjournment**

Colonel Winquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:00; Chief Mello seconded the motion. With all in favor, 4-0, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna M. Lavalley  
Administrative Assistant